ADDRESS

OF THE

DEWAN OF MYSORE

TO THE

DASARA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

30th SEPTEMBER 1914.

1.—Preliminary.

GENTLEMEN,

I rise, in obedience to the command laid upon me by His Highness the Maharaja, to welcome you to this, the thirty-first session of the Dasara Representative Assembly, and to place before you an account of the past year's administration of the State and of the measures projected or in operation to promote the well-being of His Highness' subjects.

2. On account of the increasing bulk and variety of the subjects to be dealt with, the Address will be presented, as was done last year, in two parts. The first part deals with the more important events and measures requiring notice, and the second with matters which are either of limited importance at the present time, or are connected only with the routine work of the administration.

War.

3. The thought which is uppermost in our minds at the present moment is the great war which is convulsing Europe from end to end and the effects of which, on account of the growth of communications, are felt over the entire habited portion of the world. India, as forming part of the British Empire, is intimately concerned in the war. That we are able to go on with our ordinary routine duties at such a time without undue anxiety or excitement, we owe to the great sea power of the Empire and the normal orderliness of British methods of administration. The war has brought the subjects of His Majesty in the Indian Empire nearer to the Throne, and at no time were the harmony of feeling and the solidarity of

interests between the rulers and the ruled, between the Paramount Power and the Feudatory States, felt to be closer than they are at the present time.

4. As a Feudatory State, we have endeavoured to do our part. His Highness the Maharaja has placed his troops and the entire resources of the State unreservedly at the disposal of the Imperial Government. His Highness has also contributed a sum of Rupees fifty lakhs towards the cost of the Indian Expeditionary Force which is now fighting the Empire's battle on the Continent.

5. In conveying this offer in a letter dated 20th August 1914 to His Excellency the Viceroy, His Highness said:—

> "This is a time at which the Feudatory States "and all the subjects of the British Empire should "stand shoulder to shoulder for her defence, and I "desire to assure Your Excellency, in all sincerity, of "the devotion and loyalty of my people and our "readiness to make every sacrifice to protect our "common interests."

His Excellency the Viceroy concluded a highly appreciative message in these words :—

> "For the moment, I will only add that the "thought that you, my friend, have shown such "splendid patriotism at a time like this fills my "heart with a warm glow of pleasure."

It would be superfluous to say before this Assembly that the action taken by His Highness has met with universal acclaim in every corner of the State.

Seasonal Prospects.

6. The subject which next claims our attention is the state of the season. The rainfall of last year was scanty and ill-distributed. It began late and ended early. In the five monsoon months of June to October, the total rainfall amounted to 19·38 inches in Bangalore against an average of 27·09 inches and to 29·25 inches for the whole State, or 10·32 inches short of the average. The heavy fall of the south-west monsoon did not commence till late in September and that of the north-east monsoon carried us only into the earlier part of October. The rainfall of these two months did much good but the effect was partly marred by the abrupt termination of the north-east monsoon in the first week of October.

The result was a shrinkage of area under the ragi crop and some increase in that under gram. The yield of neither crop was good. The tanks failed to get the usual supply of water and the outturn of paddy in the

maidan tract was adversely affected. In the important paddy-growing areas of the *malnad* and the Mysore District, however, the paddy crop was by no means unsatisfactory. A large number of cattle have died and many have lost condition for want of fodder.

7. The current monsoon also began badly. The usual *mungar* rains were not very abundant nor well-distributed. In the months of June and July, the rainfall amounted to 2·59 and 13·33 inches respectively, including the fall in the *malnad* parts. against an average of 4·51 and 10·25 inches; but in the *maidan* areas, the corresponding figures were 0·72 and 2·58 inches against an average of 2·22 and 3·61 inches respectively. The situation was partly relieved by the favourable rains of August, but the crops in many parts are yet young and the rainfall in the next few weeks must determine the character of our harvests at the end of the season.

Prices.

8. As a result of the rapid communications and the changing conditions of the outer world, prices have been going up in recent years and the precarious rainfall of the past two successive seasons has raised them to famine rates. This is causing much hardship to the poorer officials, artisans and labouring classes. The cultivators have been getting very good prices for their crops, which have enabled them to pay their revenue with ease; but in areas in which the crops suffered more than ordinary damage, the raiyats have had very little left to sell.

Preparations to meet distress.

9. Government have done all in their power to meet the situation. Tank beds have been ordered to be given out for cultivation; funds have been sanctioned for sinking drinking water wells; State forests have been thrown open to free grazing; arrangements have been made for procuring and supplying fodder; and a large amount of money—in fact, all that the Revenue Officers asked for—has been made available for granting loans and advances.

Steps have been taken to have the village programmes re-examined with a view to ascertaining whether the works included in them are sufficient and well-distributed. With many village works ready to hand and the unusually large number of public works and railways, some of great magnitude, in progress in different parts of the State, we are peculiarly well circumstanced in the matter of providing work to persons in need of employment.

2.—Important Events of the Year.

Visit of His Excellency the Viceroy.

10. During the year His Highness the Maharaja had the privilege of welcoming His Excellency the Viceroy in our midst. The tour lasted from the 3rd to the 21st November 1913, and it included Gersoppa Falls, Mysore, the Kheddas, Bangalore, and a visit to the Kolar Gold Fields. The visit cannot be referred to without recalling the memory of Her Excellency Lady Hardinge who accompanied the Viceroy and who to our great sorrow is now no more. I have no doubt I am voicing the sentiments of the entire Assembly, when I say that our respectful sympathies are with His Excellency Lord Hardinge in his great bereavement, and it is our earnest hope that His Excellency may have strength to continue the administration of this great Empire with the same conspicuous sympathy and success that has characterised it till now.

The Treaty.

11. Another event of outstanding importance was the generous act of the British Government in sanctioning the substitution, in place of the Instrument of Transfer of 1881, of a new Treaty for Mysore, indicating the high esteem in which His Highness the Maharaja is held by the British Government. The change was welcomed by all classes of people, and was regarded as a signal proof of the sympathy and generosity which has always marked the policy of the Supreme Government towards this State. In this connection, I cannot do better than quote the sentiments to which His Excellency the Viceroy gave expression on the 6th November 1913, when he made this historic announcement in the City of Mysore :—

"I have now the pleasant duty of making an announcement, which it is as gratifying to me to deliver, as I trust it will be to Your Highness to receive. Some four months ago Your Highness wrote me a letter in which you took exception to certain features in the Instrument of Transfer of 1881, under which the Government of Mysore was restored to Your Highness' father, and you urged that the document should be revised both in substance and in form, in such a manner as to indicate more appropriately the relation subsisting between the British Government and the State of Mysore. After a very careful consideration of the question I have decided with the

concurrence of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to substitute for the Instrument of Transfer a new Treaty which will place the relations between us on a footing more in consonance with Your Highness' actual position among the Feudatory Chiefs in India. His Majesty's Government, in accepting my proposal, have observed that Your Highness' views on this question were stated with much force and moderation and that they derive additional weight from the high character and reputation which Your Highness has always borne. With this observation I desire to associate myself in the very fullest degree, and I look on it as a particularly happy circumstance, that it should have fallen to my lot to convey to Your Highness on this auspicious occasion so striking a proof of the esteem and regard in which you are held by those responsible for the Government of this great Empire."

Reforms in the Legislative Council.

12. The reforms in the Legislative Council, which His Highness the Maharaja was pleased to sanction and which were announced to you last year, have been fully given effect to. They included the nomination of four elected members from this Assembly and four from the districts, and the grant of the privileges of interpellation and discussion of the budget.

The reformed Council met three times during the year and the State Budget of the current year was placed before them for discussion in June last with an explanatory statement by the Financial Secretary. The discussion took place on the 7th July and was participated in by nearly all the non-official members present.

The Executive Council and the appointment of His Highness the Yuvaraja as an Extraordinary Member.

13. The number of members on the Executive Council has been increased from two to three in consequence of the appointment of His Highness the Yuvaraja as an Extraordinary Member. The Yuvaraja, as you are aware, worked for some time as Military Secretary to His Highness the Maharaja, but the post offered too limited a field for his abilities and His Highness therefore decided, after the Yuvaraja's return from the European tour, that he should be appointed as an Extraordinary Member of the Council. The Yuvaraja has now held that high office for about eight months and though it is not for me to appraise his work, I cannot refrain from expressing the admiration of a colleague for the soundness of judgment and the breadth and freshness of view that he brings to bear on questions which come before him.